

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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SHAKTOOLIK CHUM SALMON OPENING POSTPONED BY 6 HOURS AND OTHER NORTON SOUND OPENINGS SCHEDULED.

The directed chum salmon opening in the Shaktoolik Subdistrict originally scheduled from 12:00 noon Thursday, July 12 to 12:00 noon Friday, July 13, has been rescheduled at the request of the buyer. The tendering vessel Egavik is currently encountering delays offloading pink salmon onto the processing vessel. However, the Egavik should be able to reach the Shaktoolik fishing grounds by Thursday evening. Therefore, the new start and end times for this period will be from 6:00 p.m. Thursday, July 12 to 6:00 p.m. Friday, July 13. Permit holders in the Shaktoolik Subdistrict will be limited to 100 fathoms of length in gillnets comprised of 6 inch or less mesh. This directed chum salmon period is warranted based on very good catches of chum salmon and low incidental harvest of Chinook salmon during the previous opening. Eleven permit holders caught 4,900 chum salmon in 21 hours of fishing during the July 5th opening and only one Chinook salmon was incidentally caught. Chum salmon commercial catch per unit of effort index for this period was 18.60, which was 340% above the long-term average chum salmon CPUE of 4.20.

A directed pink salmon period will also be permitted in the entire Unalakleet Subdistrict from Junction Creek south to Black Point, from 6:00 p.m. Thursday, July 12 to 6:00 p.m. Friday, July 13. This period will be followed by a 12-hour directed pink salmon opening in the Elim Subdistrict from 12:00 noon to 12:00 midnight, Saturday evening, July 14. Commercial set nets used during these openings must have a mesh size of 4 ½ inches or less.

Pink salmon escapement goals in most Norton Sound systems have been achieved or are projected to be easily achieved this season and commercial catches have been good. During the July 6th pink salmon opening in Unalakleet, 21 permit holders harvested nearly 27,000 pink salmon, and incidentally harvested only 4 Chinook salmon. Catches were so good that several permit holders pulled early to ensure they could deliver on time to the tender. Capacity concerns are not anticipated for these upcoming periods because the tendering vessel Lucky Lady is rated for just over 100,000 lbs which should easily support deliveries from the 24-hour July 12 Unalakleet opening and the 12-hour July 14 Elim Subdistrict opening. Directed pink salmon openings are also expected in the Golovnin Bay and Norton Bay Subdistricts and directed chum salmon openings are possible as early as Saturday, July 14 for the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts.